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## Inside the Brain: Depression - Antidepressants - Suicide Things you never knew about Robin Williams

Glycoscience Lesson #15

by JC Spencer

The suicide of comedian Robin Williams prompted speculation of how the brain works in depression. Why did he become so distraught that he ended his life?

A passionate person, especially a bipolar or ADHD passionate person, can feel a depth of sorrow or fear that may trigger an impulse to take immediate action though that action be dead wrong. Antidepressants are dangerous drugs known to take control and take lives.

Williams evidenced strong self-will. He snorted cocaine with John Belushi the night Belushi died. Robin suddenly went "cold turkey," quitting alcohol and cocaine on his own – an act of the will he thought may be rooted in his mother's faith in God... He succumbed after 20 years of sobriety. Financial struggles appear to have contributed to his depression.

Some say there is a fine line between genius and mental illness. I have never accepted that thought much more than believing that eating salads make you overweight because I see so many obese people eating salads.

*Psychology Today* reported that about 9 million people were treated for depression in 2007 with the numbers growing. National Institutes of Mental Health report ~16 million people in the U.S. suffer from depression.

Brain modification, behavioral therapy and medication can become an explosive combination especially when the mix includes "downers". And, about 60 percent of those who commit suicide add alcohol to the mix.

It may be in his attempts to beat his alcohol and drug addiction that Williams most actively sought spiritual answers. Dr. Ted Baehr Founder and Chairman of the Christian Film and Television Commission said Robin Williams was working on his depression and addiction. "He was always searching and never quite finding." Baehr met with Williams on several occasions and the two discovered they both had grown up with parents who shared similar beliefs. "I shared with him the concrete reality of Jesus and how my life was changed," Baehr said, noting that when he came to Christ, his own drug abuse suddenly stopped. The same happened to Baehr's father upon his conversion late in life. Williams had, at one point, 'accepted Jesus Christ' in one of the recovery programs," Baehr said, "but he never found the

*transformation that Jesus brings.*" We put celebrities on pedestals but they really want someone to care about them as human beings.

Williams said, "Having the idea of a really loving and forgiving God really helps if you're an alcoholic..." He noted that religion had been an integral part of his childhood. After rehab, he exclaimed, "It's become much more personal to me... Instead of my mother saying, 'We're going to church now', there's much more a sense of coming back to life for me. I grew up in San Francisco where the gospel music is so beautiful. I'm more religious in the sense of an open, compassionate church that's there to take care of people with outreach programs and counseling. The idea of really working together, that means something... to take care of everyone, and the idea of compassion is powerful to me." He described his struggle with alcohol as "one of the coming attractions of hell. You have an idea there's a dark force when you're in that space, and it's totally the opposite of doing the right thing," Williams said.

Medications used to treat depression may be the very cause for the increase in mental illness. Seeking a solution in all the wrong places may be more dangerous than the depression while contributing to over-prescription of medication. Doctors of tomorrow will look back on our barbaric medical practices and say, "How could we have been so stupid?"

Glycoscience research is providing answers and Pilot Surveys are evidencing how specific sugars in the human body calm the nerves, modulate the immune system and help balance hormones. Insulin regulation is vital. Most depression cases have low levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin. Research indicates that the sugar Trehalose actually serves as an antidepressant though no medical claims are made to that affect.

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